UNFORTUNATE MOTHER'S ADVICE TO HER Absent DAUGHTERS; IN A LETTER TO Miss PENNINGTON.

LONDON:
Printed by S. CHANDLER,
And Sold by W. BRISTOW, next the Great Toy-Shop
St. Paul's Church-Yard; and C. ETHRINGTON,
Bookseller in York.
M DCC LXI. [Price 1s. 6d.

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Mother's Advice, &c.

My Dear JENNY,

WAS there any Probability that a Letter from me would be permitted to reach your Hand alone, I ſhould not have choſen this leaſt eligible Method of writing to you. The Public is no way concerned in Family Affairs, nor ought to be made a Party in them; but my Circumſtances are ſuch, as lay me under a Neceſſity of either communicating my Sentiments to the World, or concealing them from you; the latter would, I think, be the Breach of an indiſpenſible

Duty, which obliges me to wave the Impropriety of the former.

A LONG Train of Events, of a moſt extraordinary Nature, conſpired to remove you, very early, from the tender Care of an affectionate Mother; you were then too young to be able to form any right Judgment of her Conduct, and ſince that Time it is very probable that it has been repreſented to you in the moſt unfavourable Light. The general Prejudice againſt me I never gave myſelf the uſeleſs Trouble of any Endeavour to remove.—I do not mean to infer from hence that the Opinion of others is of no material Conſequence; on the contrary, I would adviſe you always to remember, that, next to the Conſciouſneſs of acting Right, the Public Voice ſhould be regarded, and to endeavour, by a prudent Behaviour, (even in the moſt trifling Inſtances) to ſecure it in your Favour. 'Twas my Misfortune to be educated in a different Opinion; I was early and wiſely taught, that Virtue was the one Thing neceſſary, and without it no Happineſs could be expected either in

this, or in any future State of Exiſtence; but with this good Principle, a miſtaken one was at the ſame Time inculcated; namely, that the Self-approbation ariſing from conſcious Virtue was alone ſufficient, and the Cenſures of an ill-natured World, ever ready to calumniate, when not founded on Truth, were beneath the Concern of a Perſon whoſe Actions were guided by the ſuperior Motive of Obedience to the Will of Heaven: This Notion, ſtrongly imbibed before Reaſon had gained ſufficient Strength to diſcover its Fallacy, was the Cauſe of an inconſiderate Conduct in my ſubſequent Life, which ſtampt my Character with a diſadvantageous Impreſſion. To you I ſpeak with the utmoſt Sincerity, nor will conceal a Fault that you may profit by the Knowledge of, and therefore freely own, that in my younger Years, ſatisfied with keeping ſtrictly within the Bounds of Virtue, I took a fooliſh Pleaſure in exceeding thoſe of Prudence, and was ridiculouſly vain of indulging a Latitude of Behaviour that others of my Age were afraid of launching into; but

then, in Juſtice to myſelf, I muſt at the ſame Time declare, that this Freedom was only taken in public Company, and ſo extremely cautious was I of giving, what to me appeared any juſt Ground for Cenſure, that I call Heaven to witneſs, your Pappa was the firſt Man I ever made any private Aſſignation with, or met in a Room alone, nor with him, 'till after the moſt ſolemn mutual Engagement, that of the matrimonial Ceremony, had bound us to each other. My Behaviour then, was ſuch, as, he has frequently ſince acknowledged, fully convinced him that I was not only innocent of any criminal Act, but of every vicious Thought, and that the outward Freedom of my Deportment proceeded merely from great Gaiety of Temper, and a very high flow of Spirits; never broke (if the Expreſſion may be allowed) into the formal Rules of Decorum. To ſum up the whole in a few Words, my private Conduct, was what the ſevereſt Prude could not condemn; my public, ſuch as the moſt finiſhed Coquet alone would have ventured upon; the lat-

ter only could be known to the World, and, conſequently, from thence muſt their Opinion be taken, which, you will eaſily ſee, could not be favourable to me, but, on the contrary, gave a general Prejudice, that has ſince been made an Argument to gain Credit for the malicious Falſhoods laid to my Charge: For this Reaſon (convinced by long Experience that the greater Part of Mankind are ſo apt to receive, and ſo willing to retain a Bad Impreſſion of others, that when ſuch Prepoſſeſſions are once eſtabliſhed, there is hardly a Poſſibility through Life of removing them) I have, for ſome Years paſt, ſilently acquieſced in the Diſpenſations of Providence, without attempting any Juſtification of myſelf, and being conſcious that the infamous Aſperſions caſt on my Character were not founded on Truth, have ſet down content with the Certainty of an open and perfect Acquittal of all Vicious Diſpoſitions, or Criminal Conduct, at that great Day when all Things ſhall appear as they really are, and both our Actions and the moſt ſecret

Motives

Motives of them, be made manifeſt to Men and Angels. Had your Papa been amongſt the Number of thoſe who were deceived by Appearances, I ſhould have thought it my Duty to leave no Method uneſſayed to clear myſelf in his Opinion ;—but that was not the Caſe : He knows that many of thoſe Appearances, urged againſt me, were given, not only under his Direction, but by his abſolute Command, (which, contrary to Reaſon and my own Intereſt I was, for more than twelve Years, weak enough implicitly to obey) and that others, even ſince our Separation, were occaſioned by ſome particular Inſtances of His Behaviour, which rendered it impoſſible for me to act with Safety in any other Manner ; to him I appeal for the Truth of this Aſſertion, who is conſcious of the Meaning, that may hereafter be explained to you. Perfectly acquainted with my Principles and natural Diſpoſition, his Heart, I am convinced, never here condemned me. Being greatly incenſed that my Father's Will

gave

gave to me an independent Fortune, which Will he imagined I was accessary to, or, at least, could have prevented: he was thereby laid open to the Arts of designing Men, (who having their own Interest solely in View) worked him up into a Desire of Revenge, and from thence (upon probable Circumstances) into a public Accusation: though that was supported only by the single Testimony of a Person whose known Falsehood had made him a thousand Times declare, that he would not credit her Oath in the most trifling Incident; yet when he was disappointed of the additional Evidence he might have been flattered with the Hope of obtaining, 'twas too late to recede.—This I sincerely believe to be the Truth of the Case, tho' too well known his *tenacious* Temper to expect a present Justification; but whenever he arrives on the Verge of Eternity, if Reason holds her Place to that awful Moment, and Religion has any Power on his Heart, I make no doubt, he will then acquit me to his Children, and with Truth confess that no Part of my Behaviour to him ever de-

served

ſerved the Treatment I have met with. I am Sorry am I to be under the Neceſſity of pointing out Faults in the Conduct of another, which are perhaps long ſince repented of, and ought then to be as much forgot as they are moſt truly forgiven: Heaven knows, that ſo far from retaining any Degree of Reſentment in my Heart, the Perſon breathes not whom I wiſh to hurt, or to whom I would not this Moment render every Service in my Power. The Injuries by me ſuſtained, had I no Children, ſhould contentedly be buried in Silence till the great Day of Retribution; but the falſe Impreſſions which, by ſuch Silence, might be fixed on your Mind and thoſe of your Brothers and Siſters, whom I include with you, 'tis incumbent on me in Juſtice to you, to them, and to myſelf, as far as poſſible, to efface. To this End it will be neceſſary to enter into a circumſtantial Hiſtory of near Fifteen Years, full of Incidents of a Nature ſo uncommon as to be ſcarcely credible, which I am convinced will effectually clear me, in your Opinions, of the Imputations I now

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lie under, and prove, almoſt to a Demonſtration, the true Cauſe of thoſe Proceedings againſt me that were couched under pretended Motives, as injurious to my Reputation as they were falſe in themſelves. But this muſt be deferred ſome Time longer; you are all yet too young to enter into Things of this Kind, or to judge properly of them. When a few Years ſhall, by ripening your Underſtandings, remove this Objection, you ſhall be informed of the whole Truth without Diſguiſe or Partiality,—'till then ſuſpend your Belief of all that may have reached your Ears with regard to me, and wait the Knowledge of thoſe Facts my future Letter will reveal for your Information.

THUS much I thought it neceſſary to premiſe concerning myſelf, tho' foreign to the Deſign of this Epiſtle, which is only to remind you that you have ſtill an affectionate Mother, anxious for your Welfare, to give you ſome Advice with regard to your Conduct in Life,—and to lay down a few Precepts that, if attended to, will in the beſt Manner in my Power ſupply

the Deprivation of a conſtant tender maternal Care; The Addreſs is to you in particular, your Siſters being yet too young to receive it, but my Intention for the equal Service of you all.

You are juſt entering, my dear Girl, into a World full of Deceit and Falſhood, where few Perſons or Things appear as they really are: Vice hides her Deformity with the borrowed Garb of Virtue; and though diſcernable, by the unbecoming Aukwardneſs of her Deportment under it, paſſes on Thouſands undetected: Every preſent Pleaſure uſurps the Name of Happineſs, and as ſuch deceives the unwary Purſuer; thus one general Maſk diſguiſes the Whole, and it requires a long Experience, and a penetrating Judgment to diſcover the Truth.—Thrice happy thoſe whoſe docile Tempers improve the Inſtructions of maturer Age, and thereby attain ſome Degree of this neceſſary Knowledge while it may be chiefly uſeful in directing their Conduct!

The Turn your Mind now takes, fixes the Happineſs or Miſery of your whole future

future Life, and I am too nearly concerned for your Welfare not to be moſt ſolicitouſly anxious that you may early be led into ſo juſt a way of Thinking as will be productive of a prudent, rational Behaviour, and ſecure to yourſelf a laſting Felicity. You was old enough, before our Separation, to convince me that Heaven had not denied you a good natural Underſtanding, which, properly cultivated, will ſet you above that trifling Diſpoſition too common among the Female World, that makes Youth ridiculous, Maturity inſignificant, and old Age contemptible; 'tis therefore needleſs to enlarge on that Head, ſince good Senſe is there the beſt Adviſer, and without it all Admonitions or Directions on the Subject would be as fruitleſs as to lay down Rules for an Idiot not to act fooliſhly.

THERE is no room to doubt but that ſufficient Care will be taken to give you a polite Education; but a religious one is of ſtill greater Conſequence; Neceſſary as the former is toward your making a proper Figure in the World, and being well

accepted in it, the latter is yet more ſo, as that only can ſecure to you the Approbation of the greateſt and beſt of Beings, on whoſe Favour depends your everlaſting Happineſs: Let, therefore, your Duty to God be ever the firſt and principal Object of your Care; as your Creator and Governor, he claims Adoration and Obedience; as your Father and Friend, ſubmiſſive Duty and Affection: Remember that from this common Parent of the Univerſe you received your Life, that to His general Providence you owe the Continuance of it, and to his Bounty, all the Health, Eaſe, Advantages, or Enjoyments which help to make that Life agreeable. A ſenſe of Benefits received naturally inſpires a grateful Diſpoſition, with a Deſire of making ſome ſuitable Returns; all that can here be made, for innumerable Favours every Moment beſtowed, is a thankful Acknowledgment, and a willing Obedience; in Theſe be never wanting.—Make it an invariable Rule to begin and End the Day with a ſolemn Addreſs to the Deity; I mean not by this, what is commonly with too much

much Propriety called ſaying of Prayers, viz. a cuſtomary Repetition of a few good Words without either Devotion or Attention, than which, nothing is more inexcuſable and affrontive. 'Tis the Homage of the Heart that can alone be accepted. Expreſſions of our abſolute Dependence and entire Reſignation, Thankſgiving for the Mercies already received, Petitions for thoſe Bleſſings it is fit for us to pray for, and Interceſſions for all our Fellow-Creatures, compoſe the principal Parts of this Duty, which may be comprized in very few Words, or more enlarged upon as the Circumſtances of Time and Diſpoſition may render moſt ſuitable; for it is not the Length, but the Sincerity and Attention of our Prayers that will make them efficacious: A good Heart, joined to a tolerable Underſtanding, will ſeldom be at a Loſs for proper Words with which to cloath theſe Sentiments, and all Perſons being beſt acquainted with their own particular Circumſtances, may reaſonably be ſuppoſed beſt qualified for adapting their Petitions and Acknowledgments to them; but

but for thoſe who are of a different Opinion, there are many excellent Forms of Prayer already compoſed; amongſt theſe none, that I know of, are equal to Doctor Hoadly's (the preſent Biſhop of Wincheſter) which I recommend to your Peruſal and Uſe; in the Preface to which you will find better Inſtructions on this Head than I am capable of giving, and to thoſe I refer you. 'Tis acknowledged that our Petitions cannot in any degree alter the Intentions of a Being who is in Himſelf Invariable, and without a Poſſibility of Change; all that can be expected from them is, that by bettering ourſelves they will render us more proper Objects of His favourable Regard; and this muſt neceſſarily be the Reſult of a ſerious, regular and conſtant Diſcharge of this Branch of our Duty, for 'tis ſcarcely poſſible to offer up our ſincere and fervent Devotions to Heaven, every Morning and Evening, without leaving on our Minds ſuch uſeful Impreſſions as will naturally diſpoſe us to a ready and chearful Obedience, and inſpire a filial Fear of offending,—the beſt Security Virtue can have;—

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therefore, as you value your own Happineſs, let not the Force of bad Examples ever lead you into an habitual diſuſe of Secret Prayer; or an unpardonable Negligence ſo far prevail, as to reſt ſatisfied with a formal cuſtomary inattentive Repetition of ſome well choſen Words; let your Heart and Attention always go with your Lips, and Experience will ſoon convince you that this Permiſſion of addreſſing the Supreme Being is the moſt valuable Prerogative of Human Nature, the chief, nay, the only Support under all the Diſtreſſes and Calamities this State of Sin and Miſery is liable to; the higheſt rational Satisfaction the Mind is capable of, on this Side the Grave, and the beſt Preparative for everlaſting Happineſs beyond it. This is a Duty, ever in your own Power, and therefore you only will be culpable by the Omiſſion; public Worſhip may not always be ſo, but whenever it is, do not wilfully neglect the Service of the Church, at leaſt on Sundays, and let your Behaviour there be adapted to the Solemnity of the Place, and the Intention of the Meeting. Regard neither

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the Actions or Dreſs of others; let not your Eyes rove in ſearch of Acquaintance, but in the Time of Divine Service avoid, as much as poſſible, all complimental Civilities, of which there are too great an intercourſe in moſt of our Churches; remember that your only Buſineſs there is to pay a ſolemn Act of Devotion to Almighty God, and let every Part of your Conduct be ſuitable to this great End. If you hear a good Sermon, treaſure it in your Memory, that you may reap all the Benefit it was capable of imparting; if but an indifferent one, — there muſt be ſome good Things in it, retain thoſe, and let the Remainder be buried in Oblivion; ridicule not the Preacher, who no Doubt has done his beſt, and is rather the Object of Pity, than Contempt, for having been placed in a Situation of Life which his Talents were not equal to, and may perhaps be a good Man tho' no great Orator. I would alſo recommend to you the early and frequent Participation of the Communion, (or, what is commonly called receiving the Sacrament) as the indiſpenſible Duty of every

Chriſtian;

Chriſtians, there is no Inſtitution of our Religion more ſimple, plain, and intelligible than this is, as delivered to us by our Saviour; and moſt of the elaborate Treatiſes wrote, ſince his Time, on the Subject, have ſerved only to puzzle and diſturb weak Minds, by throwing the dark Veil of Superſtition and Human Invention over a plain poſitive Command, given by Him in ſo explicit a Manner as to be eaſily comprehended by the meaneſt Capacity, and which 'tis doubtleſs in the Power of all his ſincere Followers to pay an acceptable Obedience to. Nothing has more contributed to the Neglect of this Duty than the numerous well-meaning Books that have been wrote to enjoin a Months, or a Weeks Preparation, as previouſly neceſſary to the due Performance of it; by this Means, filling the Minds of many with needleſs Terror, putting it even out of the Power of ſome to receive it at all, and inducing great Numbers to reſt ſatisfied with doing it only once or twice in a Year, on ſome high Feſtival, whereas it was certainly the conſtant Cuſtom of the Apoſtles, and primitive Chriſ-

tians, on every Sunday; and ought to be received by Us as often as it is adminiſtered in the Church we frequent (which in moſt Places is but once in a Month) nor do I think it excuſable, at any Time, to turn our Backs upon the Table we ſee prepared for that Purpoſe, on Pretence of not being fit to partake Worthily of it: The beſt, the only true Preparation for This, and every other Part of Religious Duty, is a good and virtuous Life, by which the Mind is conſtantly kept in ſuch a Devotional Frame, as to require but a little Recollection, to be ſuited to any particular Act of Worſhip or Obedience that may occaſionally happen; and without That there cannot be a greater, or more Fatal Miſtake than to ſuppoſe, that a few Days or Weeks ſpent in Humiliation and Prayer will render us at all the more acceptable to the Deity, or the better fitted for any One Inſtance of that Duty which muſt be Univerſally paid, to be either approved by Him, or advantageous to Ourſelves: I would not therefore adviſe you to read any of thoſe weekly Preparatives which are too apt to

lead

lead the Mind into Error, by teaching it to reſt in a mere Shadow of Piety, wherein there is nothing rationally ſatisfactory. The beſt Book I have ever met with on the Subject is the Biſhop of Wincheſter's Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: (to which the Prayers before-mentioned are annexed) This is well worth your careful Peruſal; the Deſign of the Inſtitution is there fully explained, agreeable both to Scripture and Reaſon, ſtript of all that Veil of Myſtery which has been induſtriouſly thrown over it, by deſigning or mistaken Men, and laid as plainly open to every Capacity as it was at firſt left us by our great Maſter. Read this Book with due Attention, you will there find every neceſſary Inſtruction concerning the Rite and every reaſonable Inducement to the conſtant and conſcientious Performance of it.

The ſincere Practice of theſe religious Duties naturally leads to the proper Diſcharge of the ſocial ones, which may be all comprehended in that one great general Rule of doing unto others as you would they

ſhould do unto you;—but of theſe more particularly hereafter. I ſhall firſt give you my Advice concerning Employment, it being of great Moment to ſet out in Life in ſuch a Method as may be uſeful to yourſelf and Beneficial to others. Time is invaluable, its Loſs irretrievable! the Remembrance of having made an ill Uſe of it muſt be one of the ſharpeſt Tortures to thoſe who are on the Brink of Eternity! and what can yield a more unpleaſing Retroſpect, than whole Years idled away in an irrational inſignificant Manner! Examples of which are continually before our Eyes. Look on every Day as a Blank Sheet of Paper put into your Hands to be filled up; remember the Characters will remain to endleſs Ages, and can never be expunged; be careful therefore not to write any thing but what you may read with Pleaſure a thouſand Years hence: I would not be underſtood in a Senſe ſo ſtrict as might debar you from any Innocent Amuſement ſuitable to your Age, and agreeable to your Inclination; Diverſions, properly regulated, are not only allowable, they are

abſo-

absolutly necessary to Youth, and are never criminal but when taken to Excess, that is, when they engross the whole Thought, are made the chief Business of Life, give a distaste to every valuable Employment; and by a Sort of Infatuation leave the Mind in a State of restless Impatience from the Conclusion of one 'till the Commencement of another. This is the unfortunate Disposition of many; guard most carefully against it; for nothing can be attended with more pernicious Consequences. A little Observation will convince you, that there is not, amongst the Human Species, a Set of more miserable Beings than those who cannot live out of a constant Succession of Diversions. These People have no Comprehension of the more satisfactory Pleasures to be found in Retirement; Thought is insupportable to them, and consequently Solitude must be intolerable; they make a Burthen to Themselves, and a Bore to their Acquaintance, by vainly seeking for Happiness in Company where they are seldom acceptable (I say vainly, for true Happiness exists only in the Mind, nothing foreign

can

can give it: The utmoſt to be attained by what is called a gay Life, is a ſhort Forgetfulneſs of Miſery to be felt with accumulated Anguiſh in every Interval of Reflection) this reſtleſs Temper is frequently the Product of a too eager Purſuit of Pleaſure in the early Part of Life, to the Neglect of thoſe valuable Improvements which would lay the Foundation of a more Solid and Permanent Felicity. Youth is the Seaſon for Diverſions, but 'tis alſo the Seaſon for acquiring Knowledge, for fixing Uſeful Habits, and laying in a Stock of ſuch well-choſen Materials, as may grow into a ſerene Happineſs that will encreaſe with every added Year of Life, and bloom in the fulleſt Perfection at the Decline of it. The great Art of Education conſiſts in aſſigning to each its proper Place, in ſuch a Manner that the one ſhall never become inſome by intrenching on the other's. Our Separation having taken from me the pleaſing Task of endeavouring, to the beſt of my Ability, to ſuit them occaſionally, as might be moſt conducive both to your Profit and Pleaſure, it only remains to give you ge-

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neral Rules, which Accidents may make it neceſſary ſometimes to vary;—that muſt be left to your own Diſcretion, and I am convinced you have a ſufficient Share of Underſtanding to be very capable of making ſuch caſual Regulations advantageouſly to yourſelf, if the Inclination is not wanting.

'Tis an excellent Method to appropriate the Morning wholly to Improvement; the Afternoon may then be allowed to Diverſions; under the laſt Head I place Company, Books of the humorous Kind, and entertaining Productions of the Needle, as well as Plays, Balls, Cards, &c. which more commonly go by that Name: From Dinner 'till Supper may be variouſly by theſe employed, with Innocence and Propriety; but let none of them ever be ſuffered to intrude on the former Part of the Day, which ſhould be always devoted to more uſeful Employments. One half Hour either before, or immediately after Breakfaſt, I would have you conſtantly give to the attentive Peruſal of ſome rationally pious Author, or ſome Part of the New Teſta-

ment;

ment; (which laſt, and indeed the whole Scripture, you ought to make yourſelf perfectly acquainted with as the Baſis on which your Religion is founded) this Practice you will reap more real Benefit from, than can be ſuppoſed by thoſe who have never made the Experiment. The other Hours may be divided amongſt thoſe neceſſary and polite Acquiſitions which are ſuitable to your Sex, Age, and Rank in Life. Study your own Language thoroughly, that you may ſpeak correctly, and Write grammatically: do not content yourſelf with the common Uſe of Words, which Cuſtom has taught you from the Cradle, but learn from whence they are derived, and what are their proper Significations. French you ought to be as well acquainted with as Engliſh; and Italian might, without much Difficulty, be added. Acquire a good Knowledge of Hiſtory; that of your own Country firſt, then of the other European Nations; read them, not with a View to amuſe, but to improve your Mind; and to that End make Reflections on what you have read, which may be uſeful to yourſelf, and ren-

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der your Converſation agreeable to others. Learn ſo much of Geography, as to form a juſt Idea of thoſe Places you read of; this will make Hiſtory more entertaining to you. It is neceſſary for you to be perfect in the four firſt Rules of Arithmetic; more you can never have Occaſion for, and the Mind ſhould not be burthened with needleſs Application. Muſic and Drawing are Accompliſhments well worth the Trouble of attaining, if your Inclination and Genius lead to either; if not, do not attempt them, for it will be only much Time and great Labour unprofitably thrown away, it being next to impoſſible to arrive at any Degree of Perfection in thoſe Arts, by the Dint of Perſeverance only, if a good Ear, and a native Genius are wanting. The Study of Natural Philoſophy you will find both pleaſing and inſtructive; pleaſing from the continual new Diſcoveries to be made of the innumerably various Beauties of Nature, (a moſt agreeable Gratification of that Deſire of Knowledge wiſely implanted in the human Mind) and inſtructive, as thoſe Diſcoveries lead to the Contemplation of the great Au-

thor of Nature, whoſe Wiſdom and Goodneſs ſo conſpicuouſly ſhine through all his Works, that it is impoſſible to reflect ſeriouſly on them, without Admiration and Gratitude.

THESE, my Dear, are but a few of thoſe mental Improvements I would recommend to you; indeed, there is no Branch of Knowledge that your Capacity is equal to, and you have an Opportunity of acquiring, which I think ought to be neglected. It has been objected againſt all Female Learning, beyond that of Houſhold Oeconomy, that it tends only to fill the Minds of the Sex with a conceited Vanity, which ſets them above their proper Buſineſs, occaſions an Indifference to, if not a total Neglect of their Family-Affairs, and ſerves only to render them uſeleſs Wives, and impertinent Companions. It muſt be confeſſed, that ſome reading Ladies have given but too much Cauſe for this Objection; and could it be proved to hold good throughout the Sex, it would certainly be right to confine their Improvements within the narrow Limits of the Nurſery, the Kitchen, and the Confectionary; but I believe it will,

upon

upon Examination be found, that ſuch ill Conſequences proceed chiefly from too great an Imbecility of Mind to be capable of much Enlargement, or from a mere Affectation of Knowledge void of all Reality. Vanity is never the Reſult of Underſtanding; a ſenſible Woman will ſoon be convinced, that all the Learning her utmoſt Application can make her Miſtreſs of will be, from the Difference of Education, in many Points inferior to that of a School-Boy; this Reflection will keep her always humble, and be an effectual Check to that Loquacity which renders ſome Women ſuch inſupportable Companions.

The Management of all Domeſtic Affairs is certainly the proper Buſineſs of Woman; and unfaſhionably ruſtic as ſuch an Aſſertion may be thought, 'tis certainly not beneath the Dignity of any Lady, however high her Rank, to know how to educate her Children, to govern her Servants, to order an elegant Table with Oeconomy, and to manage her whole Family with Prudence, Regularity and Method; if in Theſe ſhe is defective, whatever may be her At-

tainments in any other Kinds of Knowledge, ſhe will act out of Character, and, by not moving in her Proper Sphere, become rather the Object of Ridicule than Approbation: But I believe it may with Truth be affirmed, that the Neglect of theſe Domeſtic Concerns has much more frequently proceeded from an exorbitant Love of Diverſions, a ridiculous Fondneſs for Dreſs and Gallantry, or a miſtaken Pride that has placed them in a ſervile Light (fit only for the Employment of Dependents, and below the Attention of a fine Lady) than from too great an Attachment to Mental Improvements; yet from whatſoever Cauſe ſuch a Neglect proceeds it is equally unjuſtifiable. If any Thing can be urged in Vindication of a Cuſtom, unknown to our Anceſtors, which the Prevalence of Faſhion has made ſo general amongſt the modern Ladies, I mean, that of committing to the Care, and diſcretionary Power of different Servants, the ſole Management of their Family-Affairs; nothing certainly can be alledged in Defence of ſuch an Ignorance in Things of this Nature as

renders a Lady incapable of giving proper Directions on all Occaſions; an Ignorance which, in ever ſo exalted a Station, will render her contemptible even to thoſe Servants on whoſe Underſtanding and Fidelity ſhe, in fact, becomes dependent for the Regularity of her Houſe, the Propriety, Elegance, and Frugality of her Table; which laſt Article is ſeldom regarded by ſuch Sort of People, who too frequently impoſe on thoſe by whom they are thus implicitly truſted. Make yourſelf, therefore, ſo thoroughly acquainted with the moſt proper Method of conducting a Family, and the neceſſary Expence which every Article, in proportion to their Number, will occaſion, that you may come to a reaſonable Certainty of not being materially deceived, without the ridiculous Drudgery of following your Servants at the Heels, and contemptibly peeping into every obſcure Corner of your Houſe; nor is this at all difficult to attain, it requiring nothing more than an attentive Obſervation. 'Tis of late, in moſt great Families, become too much the Cuſtom to be long upon the Books of every Tradeſ-

Tradeſman they employ; to aſſign a Reaſon for this is foreign to my Purpoſe, but am certain it would, in general, be better both for themſelves and the People they deal with, never to be on them at all; and what Difficulty or Inconvenience can ariſe, in a well-regulated Family, from commiſſioning the Steward or Houſekeeper to pay for every Thing at the Time of its being brought in? This obſolete Practice (tho' in itſelf very laudable) is not at preſent, and perhaps never may again, be authoriſed by Faſhion; however, let it be a Rule with you to contract as few Debts as poſſible; moſt Things are to be purchaſed both better in their Kind and at a lower Price, by paying for them at the Time of purchaſing, but if to avoid the ſuppoſed Trouble of frequent trifling Diſburſements, you chooſe to have the leſſer Articles thrown together in a Bill, let a Note of the Quantity and Price be brought with every ſuch Parcel; file theſe Notes, compare them with the Bill when delivered in, and let ſuch Bills be regularly paid every Quarter; for it is not reaſonable to expect that a Tradeſman ſhould give lon-

get Credit, without making up the Intereſt of his Money by an advanced Price on what he Sells; and, be aſſured, if you find it inconvenient to pay at the End of three Months, that Inconvenience muſt ariſe from living at too great an Expence, and will conſequently encreaſe in ſix Months, and grow ſtill greater at the End of the Year: by making ſhort Payments you will become the ſooner ſenſible of ſuch a Miſtake, and find it at firſt more eaſy to retrench any Supernumeraries than after having been long habituated to them. If your Houſe is ſuperintended by, and your Servants accountable to an Houſekeeper, let her be accountable to yourſelf, and entirely governed by your Directions; carefully examine her Bills, and ſuffer no Extravagancies or unneceſſary Articles to paſs unnoticed; let theſe Bills be brought to you every Morning, what they contain will then be eaſily recollected without burthening your Memory; your Accounts being ſhort will be adjuſted with leſs Trouble and more Exactneſs. Should you at any Time have an upper Servant whoſe Family

mily and Education were ſuperior to that State of Subjection, which ſucceeding Misfortunes may have reduced her to, ſuch ought to be treated with peculiar Indulgence; if ſhe has Underſtanding enough to be converſable, and Humility enough always to keep her proper Diſtance, leſſen, as much as poſſible, every painful Remembrance of former Proſpects, by looking on her as an humble Friend, and making her an occaſional Companion; but never deſcend to converſe with thoſe whoſe Birth, Education, and early Views in Life, were not ſuperior to a State of Servitude; their Minds are ſuited to their Station, intoxicated by any Degree of Familiarity, they become uſeleſs and impertinent. The Habit very many Ladies have contracted of talking to, and conſulting with their Women, has ſo ſpoiled that Set of Servants, that few of them are to be met with, who do not commence their Service, by giving their unaſk'd Opinion of your Perſon, Dreſs, or Management, artfully conveyed in the too generally accepted Vehicle of Flattery; and if allowed in this, will next proceed to

offer

offer their ridiculous Advice on any Occaſion that may happen to diſcompoſe, or ruffle your Temper; check the firſt Appearance of ſuch Impertinence, by a Reprimand ſufficiently ſevere to prevent a Repetition of it. Give your Orders in a plain, diſtinct Manner, with Good-nature, joined to a Steadineſs that will ſhew they muſt be punctually obeyed; treat all your Domeſtics with ſuch Mildneſs and Affability, that you may be ſerved rather out of Affection than Fear; let them live happily under you; give them Leiſure for their own Buſineſs, Time for Innocent Recreation, and more eſpecially for attending the public Service of the Church; to be inſtructed in their Duty to GOD; without which you have no Right to expect the Diſcharge of that owing to yourſelf. When wrong, tell them calmly of their Faults; if they amend not after two or three ſuch Rebukes, diſmiſs them; but never deſcend to Paſſion and Scolding, which is inconſiſtent with a good Underſtanding, and beneath the Dignity of a Gentlewoman. Be very exact in your Hours, without which there can be no

Order in your Family, I mean thoſe of riſing, eating, &c. Require from your Servants Punctuality in theſe, and never be yourſelf the Cauſe of breaking through the Rules you have laid down, by deferring Breakfaſt, putting back the Dinner, or letting it grow cold on the Table, to wait your Dreſſing; a Cuſtom by which many Ladies introduce Confuſion, and bring their Orders into Neglect. Be always dreſſed, at leaſt, half an Hour before Dinner.——Having mentioned this important Article, I muſt be allowed a little Digreſſion on the Subject. Whatever Time is taken up in Dreſs, beyond what is neceſſary to Decency and Cleanlineſs, may be looked upon (to ſay no worſe) as a Vacuum in Life, entirely loſt: by Decency, I mean ſuch an Habit as is ſuitable to your Rank and Fortune; an ill-placed Finery, inconſiſtent with either, is not Ornamental, but Ridiculous; a Compliance with Faſhion, ſo far as to avoid the Affectation of Singularity is neceſſary, but to run into the Extream of Faſhions, more eſpecially thoſe which are inconvenient, is the certain Proof of a weak Mind; have a

better

better Opinion of yourſelf, than to ſuppoſe you can receive any additional Merit from the adventitious Ornaments of Dreſs; leave the Study of the Toilet to thoſe adapted to it, I mean to that inſignificant Set of Females whoſe whole Life, from the Cradle to the Coffin, is but a varied Scene of trifling, and whoſe Intellectuals fit them not for any Thing beyond it; ſuch may be allowed to paſs whole Mornings at their Looking-Glaſs, in the important Buſineſs of ſuiting a Set of Ribbons, adjuſting a few Curls, or determining the Poſition of a Patch; one, perhaps, of their moſt innocent Ways of idling,—but let as ſmall a Portion of your Time, as poſſible, be taken up in Dreſſing; be always perfectly clean and neat, both in your Perſon and Cloaths, equally ſo when alone, as in Company; look upon all beyond this, as immaterial in itſelf, any farther than as the different Ranks of Mankind have made ſome Diſtinction in Habit generally eſteemed neceſſary; and remember, that it is never the Dreſs, however Sumptuous, which reflects Dignity and Honour on the Perſon, it is

the Rank and Merit of the Perſon that gives Conſequence to the Dreſs.

But to return. It is your own Steadineſs and Example of Regularity that alone can preſerve uninterrupted Order in your Family; if by Forgetfulneſs or Inattention you at any Time ſuffer your Commands to be diſobeyed with Impunity, your Servants will grow upon ſuch Neglect into an Habit of Careleſſneſs, 'till repeated Faults, of which this is properly the Source, rouſe you into Anger, which an even Hand would never have made neceſſary. Be not whimſical or capricious in your Likings; approve with Judgment, and condemn with Reaſon, that acting Right may be as certainly the Means of obtaining your Favour, as the contrary of incurring your Diſpleaſure.

From what has been ſaid you will ſee, that in order to the proper Diſcharge of your Domeſtic Duties, it is abſolutely neceſſary for you to have a perfect Knowledge of every Branch of Houſhold Oeconomy, without which you can neither correct

rect what is wrong, approve what is right, or give Directions with Propriety, 'tis the Want of this Knowledge that reduces many a fine Lady's Family to a State of the utmoſt Confuſion and Diſorder on the ſudden Removal of a managing Servant, 'till the Place is ſupplied by a Succeſſor of equal Ability: How much out of Character, how ridiculous muſt a Miſtreſs of a Family appear who is entirely incapable of giving practical Orders on ſuch an Occaſion! let that never be your Caſe; remember, my Dear, this is the only proper temporal Buſineſs aſſigned you by Providence, and in a Thing ſo indiſpenſibly needful, ſo eaſily attained, and where ſo little Study or Application is neceſſary to arrive at the moſt commendable Degree of it, the Want even of Perfection is almoſt inexcuſable; make yourſelf Miſtreſs of the Theory, that you may be able, the more readily, to reduce it into Practice; and when you have a Family to command, let the Care of that always employ your principal Attention, and every Part of it be ſubjected to your own

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Inſpection. If you riſe early (a Cuſtom I hope you have not left off ſince you was with me) waſte no unneceſſary Time in dreſſing, and conduct your Houſe in a regular Method, you will find many vacant Hours unfilled up by this material Buſineſs, and no Objection can lay againſt employing thoſe in ſuch Improvements of the Mind as are moſt ſuitable to your Genius and Inclination. I believe no Man of Underſtanding will think, that under ſuch Regulations a Woman will either make a leſs agreeable Companion, a leſs uſeful Wife, a leſs careful Mother, or a worſe Miſtreſs of a Family, for all the additional Knowledge her Induſtry and Application can acquire.

The Morning being always thus advantageouſly engaged, the latter Part of the Day may, as I before ſaid, be given to Relaxation and Amuſement; ſome of theſe Hours may be very agreeably, and not unuſefully, employed by entertaining Books; a few of which, together with ſome of a religious and inſtructive Kind, are annexed as a Specimen of the Sort I would recommend

mend to your Perusal *. Novels and Romances never give yourself the Trouble of reading; though many of them contain some few good Morals, they are not worth picking out of the Rubbish intermixed; 'tis like searching for a few small Diamonds amongst Mountains of Dirt and Trash, which when found, are too inconsiderable to answer the Pains of coming at them; ridiculous as these fictitious Tales generally are, they are so artfully managed as to excite an idle Curiosity to see the Conclusion, by which Means the Reader is drawn on,

* Tillotson's, Hoadly's, Sherlock's, Clarke's, Seed's Sermons; Locke, Woollaston, Mason on Self-Knowledge, Seneca's Morals, Cicero's Works, Collier's Antoninus, Epictetus, Pope's Essay on Man, Rapin's Hist. of England, Hook's or Echard's Roman History, Salmon's Universal History, Potter's Antiquities, Kennet's Antiquities, The Spectators, The Guardians, Tomson's Seasons, Pope's Translation of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, &c.

"By these you may form a Judgment of that Sort of reading that will be both useful and entertaining to you. In the Sermons, the Practical ones of each Author are meant. Our Rule of Faith should be taken from the Scripture alone, which we must understand for ourselves; therefore the controverted Opinions of others serve in general rather to puzzle than improve the Mind.

through

through a tireſome Length of fooliſh Adventures, to the common Cataſtrophe of a Wedding, or ſometimes a Funeral, from which uſeleſs Knowledge neither Pleaſure or Profit accrues; the beſt I have met with of theſe kind of Writings, to ſay no worſe, it is little better than the Loſs of Time to peruſe; but ſome of them have more pernicious Conſequences, for by drawing Characters that never exiſt in Life, by repreſenting Perſons and Things in a falſe and extravagant Light, and by a Series of improbable Cauſes bringing on impoſſible Events, they are apt to give a romantic Turn to the Mind, that is often productive of great Errors in Judgment, and fatal Miſtakes in Conduct; of this I have ſeen frequent Inſtances, and therefore adviſe you never to meddle with this Tribe of Scribblers.

WORKS of the Needle, that employ the Fancy, may, if they ſuit your Inclination, be ſometimes a pretty Amuſement; but let this Employment never extend to large Pieces, beyond what can be accompliſhed by your ſelf without Aſſiſtance. There is

not

not a greater Extravagance under the ſpecious Name of good Houſewifery, than the furniſhing of Houſes in this Manner; whole Apartments have been ſeen thus ornamented by the ſuppoſed Work of a Lady who, perhaps, never ſhaded two Leaves in the artificial Foreſt, but has paid four Times its Value to the ſeveral People employed in bringing it to Perfection: the Expence of theſe tedious Pieces of Work I ſpeak of experimentally; having many Years paſt undertaken one of them, which when finiſhed was not worth Fifteen Pounds, and, by a Computation ſince made, did not coſt leſs than Fifty, in the Hire and Maintenance of the People employed in it; this indeed was at the Age of Seventeen; the thoughtleſs Inexperience of Youth could alone excuſe ſuch a Piece of Folly. Embroideries in Gold, Silver, or Shades of Silk, come within a narrower Compaſs: Works of that Kind which may, without calling in expenſive Aſſiſtance, or tiring the Fancy, be finiſhed in a Summer, will be a well choſen Change of Amuſement, and may (as there are three of you) be made much

more agreeable by one alternately reading aloud, while the other two are thus employed. All Kinds of what is called Plain-work (tho' no very polite Accompliſhment) you muſt be ſo well verſed in, as to be able to cut out, make, or mend, your own Linen: ſome Fathers, and ſome Huſbands, chooſe to have their Daughters, and their Wives, thus attired in the Labour of their own Hands; and from a miſtaken Notion believe this to be the great Criterion of frugal Oeconomy; where that happens to be the Inclination, or Opinion of either, it ought always to be readily complied with; but excluſive of ſuch a Motive, I ſee no other that makes the practical Part at all neceſſary to any Lady; excepting, indeed, ſuch a Narrowneſs of Fortune as admits not conveniently the keeping of an Abigail, to whom ſuch Exerciſes of the Needle much more properly appertain.

The Theatre, which, by the indefatigable Labour of the inimitable Mr. Garrick, is now brought to very great Perfection, will afford you, when in Town, an equally rational and improving Entertainment:

ment: at his Houſe your Judgment is not called in queſtion, or your Underſtanding affronted, by the impertinent Repreſentation of ridiculous Pantomimes; nor your Modeſty offended by the indecent Ribaldry of thoſe Authors, who to their Defect in Wit, have added the Want of good Senſe and good Manners: Faults of this Kind that (from a blameable Compliance with a corrupted Taſte) has ſometimes crept into the Works of better Writers, are, by his prudent Direction, generally rectified, or omitted on the Stage; you may there ſee the beſt Plays performed in the beſt Manner: do not, however, go to any that you have not before heard the Character of; be preſent only at thoſe which are approved by Perſons of Underſtanding and Virtue, as calculated to anſwer the proper Ends of the Theatre, viz. that of conveying Inſtruction in the moſt pleaſing Method. — Attend to the Sentiment, apply the Moral, and then you cannot, I think, paſs an Evening in a more uſeful, or a more entertaining Diverſion.

DANCING may alſo take its Turn as an healthful Exerciſe, and generally ſuitable to the Taſte and Gaiety of young Minds.

PART of thoſe Hours appropriated to Relaxation, muſt of Neceſſity be leſs agreeably taken up in the paying and receiving Viſits of mere Ceremony and Civility, a Tribute, by Cuſtom authoriſed, by good Manners enjoined: in Theſe, when the Converſation is only inſignificant, join in it with an apparent Satisfaction; talk of the Elegance of a Birth-Day Suit, the Pattern of a Lace, the judicious Aſſortment of Jewels, the Cut of a Ruffle, or the Set of a Sleeve, with an unaffected Eaſe; not according to the Rank they hold in your Eſtimation, but proportioned to the Conſequence they may be of in the Opinion of thoſe you are converſing with: the great Art of pleaſing is to appear pleaſed with others; ſuffer not an ill-bred Abſence of Thought, or a contemptuous Sneer, ever to betray a conſcious Superiority of Underſtanding always productive of ill-nature and diſlike; ſuit yourſelf to the Capacity and Taſte of your Company, when

that

that Taſte is confined to harmleſs Trifles; but where it is ſo far depraved, as to delight in cruel Sarcaſms on the Abſent, to be pleaſed with diſcovering the Blemiſhes in a good Character, or repeating the greater Faults of a bad one, here Religion and Humanity forbid the leaſt Degree of Aſſent: if you have not any Knowledge of the Perſons thus unhappily ſacrificed to Envy or Malice, and conſequently are ignorant as to the Truth or Falſhood of ſuch Aſperſions, always ſuſpect them to be ill-grounded, or, at leaſt, greatly exaggerated: ſhew your Diſapprobation by a ſilent Gravity, and by taking the firſt Opportunity to change the Subject; but where any Acquaintance with the Character in queſtion, gives Room for defending it, let not an ill-timed Complaiſance prevail over Juſtice; vindicate injured Innocence with all the Freedom and Warmth of an unreſtrained Benevolence, and where the Faults of the Guilty will admit of Palliation, urge all that Truth can allow, in Mitigation of Error; from this Method, beſides the Pleaſure ariſing from the Conſciouſneſs of a ſtrict Conformity to the great

Rule

Rule of doing as you would be done by, you will alſo reap to yourſelf the Benefit of being leſs frequently peſtered with Themes ever painful to a humane Diſpoſition. If unfortunately you have ſome Acquaintance whoſe Malevolence of Heart, no Sentiment of Virtue, no Check of good Manners, can reſtrain from theſe malicious Sallies of Ill-nature, to them let your Viſits be made as ſeldom, and as ſhort, as Decency will permit, there being neither Benefit or Satisfaction to be found in ſuch Company; amongſt whom only Cards may be introduced with any Advantage; on this Account it will be proper for you to know how to play at thoſe Games moſt in Uſe, becauſe it is an Argument of great Folly to engage in any Thing without doing it well; but this is a Diverſion that I hope you will have no Fondneſs for, as it is in itſelf, to ſay no worſe, a very inſignificant one.

With Perſons for whom you can have no Eſteem, Good-breeding may oblige you to keep up an Intercourſe of ceremonious Viſits; but Politeneſs enjoins not the Length or Frequency of them; here Inclination may

may be followed without a Breach of Civility; there is no Tax upon Intimacy, but from Choice, and that Choice ſhould ever be founded on Merit, the Certainty whereof you cannot be too careful in previouſly examining; great Caution is neceſſary not to be deceived by ſpecious Appearances; a plauſible Behaviour, often, upon a ſuperficial Knowledge, creates a Prepoſſeſſion in favour of Perſons, whom, upon a nearer View, may be found to have no Claim to Eſteem; the forming a precipitant Judgment ſometimes leads into an unwary Intimacy, which it may prove abſolutely neceſſary to break off, and yet that Breach be attended with innumerable Inconveniencies, nay, perhaps, with very material and laſting ill Conſequences: Prudence, therefore, here enjoins the greateſt Circumſpection. Few People are capable of Friendſhip, and ſtill fewer have all the Qualifications one would chooſe in a Friend; the fundamental Point is a virtuous Diſpoſition; but to that ſhould be added, a good Underſtanding, ſolid Judgment, Sweetneſs of Temper, Steadineſs of Mind, Freedom of Behaviour, and

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Sincerity of Heart; ſeldom as theſe are to be found united, never make a Boſom Friend of a Perſon greatly deficient in either. Be ſlow in contracting Friendſhip, and invariably conſtant in maintaining it. I expect not many Friends, but think yourſelf happy, if, through Life, you meet with one or Two who deſerve that Name, and have all the Requiſites for the valuable Relation. This may juſtly be deemed the higheſt Bleſſing of Mortality; uninterrupted Health has the general Voice; but, in my Opinion, ſuch a Friend as much deſerves the Preference, as the mental Pleaſures, both in Nature and Degree, exceed the Corporeal; the Weakneſſes, the Pains, of the Body may be inexpreſſibly alleviated by the Converſation of a Perſon, by Affection endeared, by Reaſon approved; whoſe tender Sympathy partakes your Afflictions, and ſhares your Enjoyments; who is ſteady in the Correction, but mild in the Reproof of your Faults; like a guardian Angel, ever watchful to warn you of unforſeen Danger, and by timely Admonitions prevent the Miſtakes incident to human Frailty, and Self-partiality.

lity. This is the true Office of Friendſhip; with ſuch a Friend, no State of Life can be abſolutely unhappy; but deſtitute of ſome ſuch Connection, Heaven has ſo formed our Natures for this intimate Society, that, amidſt the Affluence of Fortune, and the Flow of uninterrupted Health, there will be an aking void in the ſolitary Breaſt, that can never know a Plenitude of Happineſs. Should the Supreme Diſpoſer of all Events beſtow on you this ſuperlative Gift, to ſuch a Friend let your Heart be ever unreſervedly open; conceal no ſecret Thought, diſguiſe no latent Weakneſs, but bare your Boſom to the faithful Probe of honeſt Friendſhip, and ſhrink not, if it ſmart beneath the Touch; nor with tenacious Pride diſlike the Perſon that freely dares condemn ſome favorite Foible; but, ever open to Conviction, hear with Attention, and receive with Gratitude the kind Reproof that flows from Tenderneſs: when ſenſible of a Fault, be ingenuous in the Confeſſion, ſincere and ſteady in the Correction of it.

HAPPY is her Lot, who in an Huſband finds this invaluable Friend! yet ſo great is

the Hazard, ſo diſproportioned the Chances, that I could almoſt wiſh the dangerous Die was never to be thrown for any of you! but as moſt probably it may, let me conjure ye all, my dear Girls, if ever any of you take this moſt important Step in Life, to proceed with the utmoſt Care, and deliberate Circumſpection. Fortune and Family it is the ſole Province of your Pappa to direct in, who certainly has always an undoubted Right to a Negative Voice, though not to a Compulſive One; as a Child is very juſtifiable in the Refuſal of her Hand, even to the abſolute Command of a Father, where her Heart cannot go with it; ſo is ſhe extremely culpable, by giving it contrary to his Approbation.—Here I muſt take Shame to myſelf! and for this unpardonable Fault, do juſtly acknowledge the ſubſequent ill Conſequences of a moſt unhappy Marriage were the proper Puniſhment: this and every other Error in my own Conduct, I do, and ſhall, with the utmoſt Candour, lay open to you, ſincerely praying, that you may reap the Benefit of my Experience, and avoid thoſe Rocks I have, either by Careleſsneſs, or

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ſometimes, alas! by too much Caution ſplit againſt.

But to return.—The chief Point to be regarded in the Choice of a Companion for Life, is a real virtuous Principle, an unaffected Goodneſs of Heart; without this you will be continually ſhocked by Indecency, and pained by Impiety. So numerous have been the unhappy Victims to the ridiculous Opinion, that a reformed Libertine makes the beſt Huſband; that, did not Experience daily evince the contrary, one would believe it impoſſible for a Girl, who has a tolerable Degree of common Underſtanding, to be made the Dupe of ſo erroneous a Poſition, that has not the leaſt Shadow of Reaſon for its Foundation, and which a ſmall Share of Obſervation will prove to be falſe in Fact. A Man who has been long converſant with the worſt Sort of Women, is very apt to contract a bad Opinion of, and a Contempt for the Sex in general; Incapable of eſteeming any, he is ſuſpicious of all; jealous without Cauſe, angry without Provocation, and his own diſturbed Imagination is a continual Source of ill

Humour; to this is frequently joined a bad Habit of Body, the natural Conſequence of an irregular Life; which gives an additional Sourneſs to the Temper. What rational Proſpect of Happineſs can there be with ſuch a Companion? And that this is the general Character of thoſe who are called reformed Rakes, Obſervation will certify: but admit there may be ſome Exceptions; it is a Hazard that no conſiderate Woman would venture the Peace of her whole future Life upon. The Vanity of thoſe Girls, who believe themſelves capable of working Miracles of this Kind, and give up their Perſons to a Man of libertine Principles, upon the wild Expectation of reclaiming him, juſtly deſerves the Diſappointment they will generally meet with; for, believe me, a Wife is, of all others, the leaſt likely to ſucceed in ſuch an Attempt.—Be it your Care to find that Virtue in a Lover, which you muſt never hope to form in an Huſband. Good Senſe and good Nature are almoſt equally requiſite; if the former is wanting, it will be next to impoſſible for you to eſteem the Perſon of whoſe Behaviour you may

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have Cauſe to be aſhamed; (and mutual Eſteem is as neceſſary to Happineſs in the married State, as mutual Affection) without the latter, every Day will bring with it ſome freſh Cauſe of Vexation; 'till repeated Quarrels produce a Coldneſs, that will ſettle into an irreconcilable Averſion, and you not only become each others Torment, but the Object of Contempt to your Family and Acquaintance.

THIS Quality of good-Nature, is, of all others, the moſt difficult to be aſcertained; which proceeds from the general Miſtake of blending it with good-Humour, as in themſelves the ſame, though, in fact, no two Principles of Action are more eſſentially different; this may require ſome Explanation. — By good-Nature, then, I mean, that true Benevolence which partakes the Felicity of all Mankind, that promotes the Satisfaction of every Individual within the Reach of its Ability, that relieves the Diſtreſſed, comforts the Afflicted, diffuſes Bleſſings, and communicates Happineſs, far as its Sphere of Action can extend, and in the private Scenes of Life, will ſhine conſpi-

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cuous in the dutiful Son, the affectionate Huſband, the indulgent Father, the faithful Friend, and the compaſſionate Maſter, both to Man and Beaſt; whilſt good-Humour is nothing more than a chearful, pleaſing Deportment, ariſing either from a natural Gaiety of Mind, or an Affectation of Popularity, joined to an Affability of Behaviour, the Reſult of good-Breeding, and a ready Compliance with the Taſte of every Company. This Kind of mere good Humour, is, by far, the moſt ſtriking Quality; 'tis frequently miſtaken for, and complimented with the ſuperior Name of real good-Nature. A Man by this ſpecious Appearance has often acquired that Appellation, who in all the Actions of his private Life, has been a Moroſe, Cruel, Revengeful, Sullen, Haughty Tyrant. — Let them put on the Cap whoſe Temples fit the galling Wreath! —— On the contrary, a Man of a true benevolent Diſpoſition, and formed to promote the Happineſs of all around him, may ſometimes, perhaps, from an ill Habit of Body, an accidental Vexation, or a commendable Openneſs of Heart, above

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the Meanneſs of Diſguiſe, be guilty of little Sallies of Peeviſhneſs, or ill-Humour, that may carry the Appearance of, and be unjuſtly thought to proceed from ill-Nature, by Perſons who are unacquainted with his true Character, and take them for ſynonimous Terms; though in Reality they bear not the leaſt Analogy to each other. In order to the forming a right Judgment, it is abſolutely neceſſary to obſerve this Diſtinction, which will effectually ſecure you from the dangerous Error of taking the Shadow for the Subſtance; an irretrievable Miſtake! Pregnant with innumerable conſequent Evils.

From what has been ſaid, it plainly appears, that the Criterion of this amiable Virtue, is not to be taken from the general Opinion; mere good-Humour being, to all Intents and Purpoſes, ſufficient, in this Particular, to eſtabliſh the public Voice in favour of a Man utterly devoid of every humane and benevolent Affection of Heart. It is only from the leſs conſpicuous Scenes of Life, the more retired Sphere of Action, the artleſs Tenor of domeſtic Conduct,

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that the real Character can, with any Certainty, be drawn; theſe undiſguiſed proclaim the Man; but as they ſhun the Glare of Light, nor court the Noiſe of popular Applauſe; obſcure, they paſs unnoted, and are ſeldom known till after an intimate Acquaintance; the beſt Method, therefore, to avoid Deception in this Caſe, is to lay no Streſs on outward Appearances, too often fallacious, but to take the Rule of judging from the ſimple, unpoliſhed Sentiments of thoſe whoſe dependent Connections give them an undeniable Certainty; who not only ſee, but hourly feel, the good or bad Effects of that Diſpoſition they are ſubjected to; by this I mean, that if a Man is equally reſpected, eſteemed, and beloved by his Tenants, his Dependents, and Domeſtics, from the ſubſtantial Farmer to the laborious Peaſant, from the proud Steward to the ſubmiſſive Wretch, who, thankful for Employment, humbly obeys the menial Tribe, you may juſtly conclude, he has that true good-Nature, that real Benevolence, which delights in communicating Felicity, and enjoys the Satisfaction it diffuſes; but if by

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theſe he is deſpiſed and hated, ſerved merely from a Principle of Fear, devoid of Affection, which is very eaſily diſcoverable, whatever may be his public Character, however favourable the general Opinion, be aſſured, his Diſpoſition is ſuch, as can never be productive of domeſtic Happineſs. I have been the more particular on this Head, as it is one of the moſt eſſential Qualifications to be regarded, and of all others the moſt liable to be miſtaken.

NEVER be prevailed with, my Dear, to give your Hand to a Perſon defective in theſe material Points; ſecure of Virtue, good Nature, and Underſtanding, in an Huſband, you may be ſecure of Happineſs; without the two former it is unattainable, without the latter, in a tolerable Degree, it muſt be very imperfect.

REMEMBER Infallibility is not the Property of Man, or you may entail Diſappointment on yourſelf, by expecting what is never to be found; the beſt of Men are ſometimes inconſiſtent with themſelves; they are liable to be hurried, by ſudden Starts of Paſſion, into Expreſſions and Actions,

which their cooler Reaſon will condemn; they may have ſome Oddities of Behaviour, ſome Peculiarities of Temper, be ſubject to accidental ill Humour, or whimſical Complaints; Blemiſhes of this Kind often ſhade the brighteſt Character, but are never deſtructive of mutual Felicity, unleſs made ſo by an improper Reſentment, or an ill-judged Oppoſition. Reaſon can never be heard by Paſſion; the Offer of it tends only to enflame the more; when cooled in his uſual Temper, if wrong, the Man of Underſtanding will ſuggeſt to himſelf all that could be urged againſt him, the Man of good Nature will, unupbraided, own an Error; Contradiction at the Time is, therefore, wholly unſerviceable, and highly imprudent; an after Repetition, equally unneceſſary, and injudicious. Any Peculiarities in the Temper or Behaviour, ought to be properly repreſented in the tendereſt and moſt friendly Manner; and, if done diſcreetly, will be generally well taken; but if they are ſo habitual as not eaſily to be altered, ſtrike not too often upon the unharmonious String, rather let them paſs as unobſerved;

ſuch a chearful Compliance will better cement your Union; and they may be made eaſy to yourſelf, by reflecting on the ſuperior good Qualities, by which theſe trifling Faults are ſo greatly overballanced. You muſt remember, my Dear, theſe Rules are laid down only on the Suppoſition of your being united to a Perſon who poſſeſſes the three eſſential Qualifications for Happineſs before mentioned; in this Caſe, no farther Direction is neceſſary, but that you ſtrictly perform the Duty of a Wife, viz. to love, honour, and obey; the two firſt are a Tribute ſo indiſpenſibly due to Merit, that it muſt naturally be paid by Inclination; theſe lead to the laſt, which will not only be an eaſy, but a pleaſing Taſk, ſince nothing ever can by him be enjoined, that is in itſelf improper, and few Things will, that, with any Reaſon, can be to you diſagreeable. Here ſhould this Subject end, were it not more than poſſible for you, after all that has been urged, to be led by ſome inferior Motive, to the Neglect of the primary Caution; and either from an Opinion too haſtily entertained, an unaccountable

Partiality, or the powerful Prevalence of Perſwaſion, be unfortunately induced to give your Hand, where a bad Heart, and a moroſe Temper, concealed by a well practiſed Diſſimulation, may render every flattering Hope of Happineſs abortive. Heaven in Mercy guard you from this fatal Error! Such a Companion is the worſt of all temporal Ills, a deadly Portion, that imbitters every ſocial Scene of Life, damps every riſing Joy, and baniſhes that chearful Temper which alone can give a true Reliſh to the Bleſſings of Mortality. Moſt ſincerely do I pray this may never be your Lot! and hope your prudent Circumſpection will be ſufficient to guard you from the Danger; but the bare Poſſibility of ſuch an Event, makes it not unneceſſary to lay down a few Rules, for the maintaining ſome Degree of Eaſe, under the Deprivation of Happineſs. This is by far the moſt difficult Part of my preſent Undertaking; it is hard to adviſe here, and ſtill harder to practiſe the Advice: the Subject alſo is too extenſive to be minutely treated within the Compaſs of a Letter, which muſt

confine me to the moſt material Points only; in theſe, ſhall give you the beſt Directions in my Power, ardently wiſhing you may never have Occaſion to make uſe of them.

The being united to a Man of Irreligious Principles makes it impoſſible to diſcharge a great Part of the proper Duty of a Wife; to name but one Inſtance; that of Obedience will be rendered impracticable, by frequent Injunctions inconſiſtent with, and contrary to, the higher Obligations of Morality. This is not mere Suppoſition, but ſpoke from Facts I have often ſeen, and can atteſt. Where this happens, the Reaſons for non-compliance ought to be offered in a plain, ſtrong, good-natured Manner; there is at leaſt the Chance of Succeſs from being heard; but ſhould thoſe Reaſons be rejected, or the hearing of them be refuſed, and Silence on the Subject enjoined (which is moſt probable, few People caring to hear what they know to be right, when determined not to appear convinced by it) in this obey, nor farther urge the Argument; but keep ſteady to your Principles, and neither by Perſuaſion or Threats

be prevailed with to act contrary to them; all Commands repugnant to the Laws of Chriſtianity it is your indiſpenſible Duty to diſobey; all Requeſts that are inconſiſtent with Prudence, incompatible with that Rank and Character you ought to maintain in Life, 'tis your Intereſt to refuſe; a Compliance with the former would be Criminal, a Conſent to the latter highly Indiſcreet, and ſubject you to general Cenſure; for a Man capable of requiring from his Wife what he knows to be in itſelf wrong, is equally capable of throwing the whole Blame of ſuch Miſconduct on her, and afterwards upbraiding her for a Behaviour he will, upon the ſame Principle, diſown his having been acceſſary to. Many ſimilar Inſtances have come within the Compaſs of my own Obſervation. In Things of a leſs material Nature, that are neither Criminal in themſelves, nor pernicious in their Conſequences, always acquieſce, if inſiſted on, however diſagreeable they may be to your own Temper and Inclination; ſuch a Compliance will evidently prove that your Refuſal in the other Caſe proceeds not from

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a Spirit of Contradiction, but merely from a juſt Regard to that ſuperior Duty which can never be infringed with Impunity: Paſſion may reſent, but Reaſon muſt approve this Conduct; and therefore, it is the moſt likely Method, in Time, to make a favourable Impreſſion; but failing there, you will at leaſt enjoy that ſatisfactory Self-Approbation, which is the inſeparable Attendant of a truly religious and rational Deportment.

SHOULD the painful Taſk of dealing with a moroſe tyrannical Temper be aſſigned you, there is little more to be recommended than a patient Submiſſion to an Evil which admits not of a Remedy. Ill Nature is encreaſed, Obſtinacy confirmed by Oppoſition; the leſs ſuch a Temper is contradicted, the more ſupportable will it be to thoſe who are under its baneful Influence. When all Endeavours to pleaſe are ineffectual, and a Man ſeems determined to find Fault with every Thing, as if his chief Pleaſure conſiſted in tormenting thoſe about him, it requires a more than common Degree of Patience, and Reſolution, to forbear

bear uttering those Reproaches which such a Behaviour may be justly allowed to deserve; yet is it absolutely necessary to the maintaining any tolerable Degree of Ease, not only to restrain all Expressions of Resentment, but even those disdainful Looks which are apt to accompany a contemptuous Silence, both equally tending to encrease the Malady. This diabolical Delight in giving Pain, is most unwearied in the Search of Matter for its Gratification, and can either find or unaccountably form it, in almost all the Occurrences of Life; but when suffered unobstructed, unregarded to run its malicious Course, will quickly vent its blunted Arrows, and die of Disappointment; whilst all Endeavours to appease, all Complaints of Unkindness, sharpens against yourself the Weapon's Edge, and by proving your Sensibility of the Wound, gives the wished Satisfaction to him who inflicts it. Prudence here directs more than ordinary Circumspection; that every Part of your Behaviour may be as blameless as possible, even to the abstaining from the least Appearance of Evil; and after having, to

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the utmoſt of your Power, ſtrove to merit Approbation, expect not to meet with it; by this Means you will eſcape the Mortification of being diſappointed, which, often repeated, is apt to give a gloomy Sourneſs to the Temper incompatible with any Degree of Contentment: you muſt alſo learn to be ſatisfied with the Conſciouſneſs of acting Right, according to your beſt Ability, and look with an unconcerned Indifference on the Reception every ſucceſsleſs Attempt to pleaſe may meet with.

THIS, it muſt be owned, is a hard Leſſon of Philoſophy; it requires no leſs than an abſolute Command over the Paſſions; but let it be remembered, that ſuch a Command, will itſelf moſt amply recompence every Difficulty, every Pain the obtaining it may coſt; beſides, 'tis, I believe, the only Way to preſerve any Tranquillity of Mind under ſo diſagreeable a Connection.

AS the Want of Underſtanding is by no Art to be concealed, by no Addreſs to be diſguiſed, it might be ſuppoſed impoſſible for a Woman of Senſe to unite herſelf to a Perſon whoſe Defect in this Kind, muſt

render that Sort of rational Society, which conſtitutes the chief Happineſs of ſuch an Union, impoſſible. Yet here how often has the Weakneſs of Female Judgment been conſpicuous! The Advantages of great Superiority in Rank or Fortune, has frequently proved ſo irreſiſtible a Temptation, as, in Opinion, to out-weigh not only the Folly, but even the Vices of its Poſſeſſor; a grand Miſtake! ever tacitly acknowledged by a ſubſequent Repentance, when the expected Pleaſures of Affluence, Equipage, and all the glittering Pomp of uſeleſs Pageantry, are experimentally found inſufficient to ballance the Deprivation of that conſtant Satisfaction reſulting from the ſocial Joy of converſing with a reaſonable Friend. Weak as this Motive muſt be acknowledged, 'tis yet more excuſable than one, which, it may be feared, has ſometimes prevailed; I mean, ſo great a Love of Sway, as to give the Preference to a Perſon of weak Intellectuals, in Hopes thereby of holding uncontrouled the Reigns of Government: the Expectation is in fact ill grounded; Obſtinacy and Pride being

generally the Companions of Folly, the ſilſieſt People are uſually the moſt tenacious of their Opinions; and conſequently, the hardeſt of all others to be managed;—but admit the contrary; this Principle is in itſelf Bad, tends to invert the Order of Nature, and counteract the Deſign of Providence.

A WOMAN can never be ſeen in a more ridiculous Light, than when ſhe appears to govern her Huſband; if, unfortunately, the Superiority of Underſtanding is on her Side, the apparent Conſciouſneſs of that Superiority betrays a Weakneſs that renders her contemptible in the Sight of every conſiderate Perſon, and may, very probably, fix in his Mind a Diſlike never to be eradicated. Leſt it ſhould ever be to you neceſſary, remember, that in this Caſe ſome Degree of Diſſimulation is commendable, ſo far as to let the Defect ſeem unobſerved. When he judges wrong, never flatly contradict, but lead him inſenſibly into another Opinion, in ſo diſcreet a Manner, that it may ſeem entirely his own, and let the whole Credit of every prudent Determina-

tion reſt on Him, without indulging the fooliſh Vanity of claiming any Merit to yourſelf; thus a Perſon of but an indifferent Capacity, may be ſo aſſiſted as, in many Inſtances, to ſhine with a borrowed Luſtre, ſcarce diſtinguiſhable from the Native, and by Degrees be brought into a Kind of mechanical Method of acting properly, in all the common Occurrences of Life: Odd as this Poſition may ſeem, 'tis founded in Fact, and I have ſeen the Method ſucceſsfully practiced by more than one Perſon; where a weak Mind, on the governing Side, has been ſo prudently ſet off, as to appear the ſole Director; like the Statue of the Delphic God, which was thought to give forth its own Oracles, whilſt the humble Prieſt, who lent his Voice, was by the Shrine concealed, nor ſought a higher Glory than a ſuppoſed Obedience to the Power he would be thought to ſerve.

FROM hence it may be inferred, that by a perfect Propriety of Behaviour, Eaſe and Contentment is, at leaſt, attainable with a Companion who has not the moſt exalted Underſtanding; but then Virtue and good

Nature are preſuppoſed, or there will be nothing to work upon; a vicious, ill natured Fool, being ſo untractable and tormenting an Aſſociate, that there needs only to add Jealouſy to the Compoſition, to make the Curſe compleat.

This Paſſion, once ſuffered to get Footing in the Heart, is hardly ever to be extirpated; it is a conſtant Source of Torment to the Breaſt that gives it Reception, and an inexhauſtible Fund of Vexation to the Object of it: with a Perſon of this unfortunate Diſpoſition, it is prudent to avoid the leaſt Appearance of Concealment; a Whiſper in a mixed Company, a Meſſage given in a low Voice to a Servant, has, by the Power of a diſturbed Imagination, been magnified into a material Injury; whatever has the Air of Secreſy, raiſes Terror in a Mind naturally diſtruſtful; a perfect unreſerved Openneſs, both in Converſation and Behaviour, ſtarves the anxious Expectation of Diſcovery, and may very probably lead into an habitual Confidence, the only Antidote againſt the Poiſon of Suſpicion: it is eaſier to prevent, than to remove a received ill

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Impreſſion, and conſequently, much wiſer to be ſometimes deficient in little Points of Civility, which, however indifferent in themſelves, may happen unaccountably to claſh with the Eaſe of a Perſon, whoſe Repoſe it is both your Duty and Intereſt to promote — much more commendable contentedly to incur the Cenſure of a trifling Diſpoſition, by a circumſtantial, unaſked Relation of inſignificant Incidents, than to give any Room for apprehending the leaſt Degree of Reſerve. Such a conſtant Method of Proceeding, together with a reaſonable Compliance, is the moſt likely to cure this painful Turn of Mind; for by with-holding every Support that could give Strength to it, the Want of Matter to feed on, may, probably in Time, cauſe its Extinction: if, unhappily, it is ſo conſtitutional, ſo interwoven with the Soul, as to become, in a Manner, inſeparably united with it, nothing remains but a patient Submiſſion to the Will of Heaven, under the Preſſure of an unalterable Evil, — to guard carefully againſt the natural Conſequence of repeated undeſerved Suſpicions, viz. a growing Indifference, that too frequently

quently terminates in Averſion, and by conſidering ſuch a Situation as a Trial of Obedience and Reſignation, receive the Comfort that muſt ariſe from properly exerciſing one of the moſt exalted of the Chriſtian Virtues. —— I cannot diſmiſs this Subject without adding a particular Caution to yourſelf concerning it.

JEALOUSY is, on ſeveral Accounts, ſtill more inexcuſable in a Woman; there is not any Thing that ſo much expoſes her to Ridicule, or ſo much ſubjects her to the Inſult of affrontive Addreſſes: it is an Inlet to almoſt every poſſible Evil, the fatal Source of innumerable Indiſcretions, the ſure Deſtruction of her own Peace, and frequently proves the Bane of her Huſband's Affection. Give not a momentary Harbour to its Shadow in your Heart; fly from it as from the Face of a Fiend, that would lead your unwary Steps into a Gulph of unalterable Miſery. When once embarked in the matrimonial Voyage, the fewer Faults you diſcover in your Partner, the better; never ſearch after what it will give you no Pleaſure to find; never deſire to hear what

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you will not like to be told; therefore avoid that Tribe of Impertinents, who, either from a malicious Love of Diſcord, or the meaner, tho' leſs criminal, Motive of ingratiating themſelves by gratifying the blameable Curioſity of others, ſow Diſſention wherever they gain Admittance, by telling unwelcome Truths; or, more frequently, by inſinuating invented Falſhoods, injure innocent People, diſturb domeſtic Union, and deſtroy the Peace of Families. Treat theſe Emiſſaries of Satan with the Contempt they deſerve; hear not what they offer to communicate, but give them at once to underſtand, that you can never look on thoſe as your Friends who ſpeak in a diſadvantageous Manner of that Perſon whom you would always chooſe to ſee in the moſt favourable Light: If not effectually ſilenced by ſuch Rebukes, be inacceſſible to their Viſits, and break off all Acquaintance with ſuch incorrigible Peſts of Society, who will be ever upon the Watch to ſeize an unguarded Opportunity of diſturbing your Repoſe.

Should the Companion of your Life be guilty of ſome ſecret Indiſcretions, run not

not the Hazard of being told by theſe malicious Meddlers, what in Fact it is better for you never to know; but if ſome unavoidable Accident betrays an imprudent Correſpondence, take it for a Mark of Eſteem, that he endeavours to conceal from you, what he knows you muſt, upon a Principle of Reaſon and Religion, diſapprove; and do not, by diſcovering your Acquaintance with it, take off the Reſtraint which your ſuppoſed Ignorance lays him under, and thereby, perhaps, give a Latitude to undiſguiſed Irregularities. Be aſſured (whatever accidental Sallies the Gaiety of inconſiderate Youth may lead him into) he can never be indifferent to you, whilſt he is careful to preſerve your Peace, by concealing what he imagines might be an Infringment of it: reſt ſatisfied, that Time and Reaſon will moſt certainly get the better of all Faults, which proceed not from a bad Heart, and that by maintaining the firſt Place in his Eſteem, your Happineſs will be built on too firm a Foundation to be eaſily ſhaken.

I HAVE been thus particular on the Choice of an Huſband, and the material Parts of Conduct in a married Life, as thereon depends not only the temporal, but often the eternal Felicity of thoſe who enter into that State; a conſtant Scene of Diſagreement, ill Nature and Quarrels neceſſarily unfitting the Mind for every religious and ſocial Duty, by keeping it in a Diſpoſition diametrically oppoſite to that Chriſtian Piety, that practical Benevolence and rational Compoſure which alone can prepare it for everlaſting Happineſs.

INSTRUCTIONS on this Head, conſidering your tender Age, may ſeem premature, and ſhould have been deferred, 'till Occaſion called for them, had our Situation allowed me frequent Opportunities of communicating my Sentiments to you; but that not being the Caſe, I have choſe in this Epiſtle, at once, to offer you my beſt Advice in every Circumſtance of great Moment to your well Being both here and hereafter, leſt, at a more proper Seaſon, it might not happen to be in my Power. This Part you may defer the Conſideration of, 'till the Deſign of entring into

to a new Scene of Life may make it uſeful to you; which I hope will not be yet ſome Years; an unhappy Marriage being generally the Conſequence of a too early Engagement, before Reaſon has gained ſufficient Strength to form a ſolid Judgment, on which only a proper Choice can be determined. Great is the Hazard of a Miſtake, and irretrievable the Effects of it! Many are the Degrees between Happineſs and Miſery: abſolute Miſery, I will venture to affirm, is to be avoided by a proper Behaviour, even under all the complicated Ills of human Life; but to arrive at that proper Behaviour, requires the higheſt Degree of Chriſtian Philoſophy; and who would voluntarily put themſelves upon a State of Trial, ſo ſevere, that not one in a Thouſand have been found able to come off victorious? Betwixt this and poſitive Happineſs, there are innumerable Steps of comparative Evil; each has its ſeparate Conflict, variouſly difficult, differently painful, under all which a patient Submiſſion, and a conſcious Propriety of Behaviour, is the only attainable Good: far ſhort of poſſible temporal Felicity, is the

Eaſe ariſing from hence! reſt not content with the Proſpect of ſuch Eaſe, but fix on a more eligible Point of View, by aiming at true Happineſs; and, take my Word, that can never be found in a married State, without the three eſſential Qualifications already mentioned, Virtue, good Nature, and good Senſe, in an Husband: remember, therefore, my dear Girl, this repeated Caution; if you ever reſolve on Marriage, never to give your Hand to a Man who wants either of them; whatever other Advantages he may be poſſeſſed of, ſo ſhall you not only eſcape all thoſe Vexations, which Thouſands of unthinking Mortals hourly repent the having brought upon themſelves, but moſt aſſuredly, if it is not your own Fault, enjoy that uninterrupted domeſtic Harmony, in the affectionate Society of a virtuous Companion, that conſtitutes the higheſt Satisfaction of human Life. Such an Union, founded on Reaſon and Religion, cemented by mutual Eſteem and Tenderneſs, is a Kind of faint Emblem (if the Compariſon may be allowed) of the promiſed Reward of Virtue in a future State; and, moſt certainly,

tainly, an excellent Preparative for it, by keeping the Mind in a conſtant Equanimity, a regular Compoſure, that naturally leads to the proper diſcharge of all the Religious and Social Duties of Life; the unerring Road to everlaſting Peace. The firſt have been already ſpoken to; it remains only to mention ſome few of the latter.

AMONGST theſe Oeconom[illegible] perhaps, be thought [illegible] yet as many of the Du[illegible] are often rendered [illegible] Want of it, there is no [illegible] impropriety in ranking it under [illegible], as may at firſt be imagined: for Inſtance; a Man who lives at an Expence beyond what his Income will ſupport, lays himſelf under a Neceſſity of being unjuſt, by with-holding from his Creditors what they have a Right to demand from him, as their due, by all Laws both Human and Divine; and thereby often entails Ruin on an innocent Family, who, but for the Loſs ſuſtained by his Extravagance, might have comfortably ſubſiſted on the Profits of their Induſtry; he likewiſe puts it out of his own Power

to

to give that Relief to the Indigent which, by the Laws of Humanity, they have a Right to expect; the Goods of Fortune being given, (as a great Divine excellently obſerves) for the Uſe and Support of others, as well as the Perſon on whom they are beſtowed. Theſe are ſurely great Breaches of that Duty we owe to our Fellow-Creatures, and are the ſubſequent Effects produced by the Want of Oeconomy.

You will find it a very good Method, ſo to regulate your ſtated Expences, as to bring them always one fourth Part within your certain annual Income; by this Means you will avoid being at any Time diſtreſſed by unforeſeen Accidents, and have it more eaſily in your Power materially to relieve thoſe who deſerve Aſſiſtance. The giving trifling Sums, indiſcriminately to ſuch as appear neceſſitous, is ſo far from being commendable, that 'tis a real Injury to Society; an Encouragement to Idleneſs, and helps to fill the Streets with lazy Beggars, that live upon miſapplied Bounty, to the Prejudice of the induſtrious Poor, who are uſeful Members of the Common-Wealth;

and on whom ſuch Benefactions might be ſerviceably beſtowed: be very ſparing in this Kind of Donations; they are an inſignificant Relief to the Receivers, ſuppoſing them really in Want, and, frequently repeated, amount to a conſiderable Sum in the Years Account. The proper Objects of Charity are, thoſe who by unavoidable Misfortunes have fallen from affluent Circumſtances into a State of Poverty and Diſtreſs; thoſe alſo, who by unexpected Diſappointments in Trade, are on the Point of being reduced to an Impoſſibility of carrying on that Buſineſs, on which their preſent Subſiſtence, and future Proſpects in Life depend, from the Incapacity of raiſing an immediate Sum to ſurmount the Difficulty; and thoſe, who by their utmoſt Induſtry can hardly ſupport their Families above the Miſeries of Want; or who by Age or Illneſs are rendered incapable of Labour. Appropriate a certain Part of your Income to the Relief of theſe real Diſtreſſes. To the firſt, give as largely as your Circumſtances will allow. To the ſecond (after the Example of an excellent Prelate of our own

Church)

Church) lend, if it is in your Power, a ſufficient Sum to prevent the threatened Ruin, on condition of being repaid the Loan, without Intereſt, if Providence enables them, by future Succeſs, to do it with Convenience. The ſame Method may be uſed where Indigence renders Induſtry unavailable, by depriving it of the Means to lay in a ſmall original Stock, to be improved upon. Never take a Note of Hand, or any Acknowledgment of ſuch Loan, leſt what you intended for a Benefit, ſhould be afterwards made the Inſtrument of Ruin to the Receiver, by a different Diſpoſition in your Succeſſor. Such Aſſiſtance ought not to be given to any, without a thorough Knowledge of their Character, and having good Reaſon to believe them not only induſtrious, but ſtrictly honeſt; which will be a ſufficient Obligation on them for the Repayment: and the Sums ſo repaid, ought to be laid by, 'till an Opportunity again Offers of making them, in like Manner, ſerviceable to others. The latter Sort who are able to work, may, by a ſmall Addition to the Profits of their own Labour, be reſcued

from

from Misery, and put into a comfortable Way of Subsistence. Those who by Age, or Infirmity are rendered utterly incapable of supporting themselves, have an undoubted Right, not only to the Necessaries, but even to some of the Conveniencies of Life, from all whom Providence has placed in the more happy State of Affluence and Independance.

As your Fortune and Situation are yet undetermined, I have purposely laid down such Rules as may be adapted to every Station. A large Fortune gives greater Opportunity of doing Good, and communicating Happiness in a more extensive Degree, but a small one is no Excuse for with-holding a proportionate Relief to real and deserving Objects of Compassion; to assist them is an indispensible Duty of Christianity. The first and great Commandment is to love God with all your Heart; the Second, to love your Neighbour as yourself. *Whoso seeth his Brother in Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?*—Or how the Love of his Neighbour? If deficient in

theſe primary Duties, vain are the Hopes of Acceptance, built on a partial Obedience to the leſſer Branches of the Law! Inability is often pleaded as an Excuſe for the Want of Charity, by Perſons who make no Scruple of daily laviſhing on their Pleaſures, what, better applied, might have made an indigent Family happy through Life: theſe looſe Sight of real Felicity, by the miſtaken Purſuit of its Shadow: ſuch Pleaſures die in the Enjoyment, are often ſucceeded by Remorſe, and always by Satiety; whereas the true Joy, the ſweet Complacency, reſulting from benevolent Actions, encreaſes by Reflection, and muſt be immortal as the Soul. So exactly, ſo kindly, is our Duty made to coincide with our preſent, as well as future Intereſt, that incomparably more Satisfaction will accrue to a conſiderate Mind, from denying itſelf, even ſome of the Agreeables of Life, in order the more effectually to relieve the Unfortunate, than a full Indulgence of every temporal Gratification could beſtow.

HOWEVER ſmall your Income may be, remember that a Part of it is due to Merit

in Diſtreſs; ſet by an annual Sum for this Purpoſe, even though it ſhould oblige you to abate ſome unneceſſary Expence to raiſe the Fund; by this Method Perſons of ſlender Fortune have been enabled to do much Good, and give Happineſs to many. If your Fund will not admit of frequent Draughts upon it, be the more circumſpect with regard to the Merit of thoſe you relieve, that Bounties not in your Power to repeat often, may not be miſapplied: but if Providence, by a more ample Fortune, ſhould bleſs you with a larger Ability of being ſerviceable to your Fellow-Creatures, prove yourſelf worthy of the Truſt repoſed in you, by making a proper Uſe of it: Wide as your Influence can extend, turn the Cry of Diſtreſs and Danger into the Song of Joy and Safety, feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked, comfort the Afflicted, give Medicine to the Sick, and with it, all the Alleviation their unfortunate Circumſtances can admit of—Thus may you truly make a Friend of the unrighteous Mammon, thus turn the periſhable Goods of Fortune into everlaſting Bleſſings.—Upon

Earth you will partake that Happineſs you impart to others, and lay up for yourſelf *Treaſures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Ruſt can corrupt, nor Thieves break through and ſteal.*

A Person who has once experienced the Advantages of right Action, will be led by the Motive of preſent Self-Intereſt, as well as future Expectation, to the Continuance of it. There is no Injunction of Chriſtianity, that a ſincere Chriſtian will not by Obedience find is ſo calculated as to be directly, in ſome Meaſure, its own Reward.

The Forgiveneſs of Injuries (to which alone is annexed the Promiſe of Pardon for our own Offences, and required by the Goſpel, not only ſo far as to forbear all Kinds of Retaliation, but alſo to render you equally diſpoſed to ſerve, with your utmoſt Power, thoſe Perſons who have wilfully injured you, as if no ſuch Injury had been received from them) has by ſome been accounted a hard Precept; yet the Difficulty of it ariſes merely from, and is proportionable to, the Badneſs of the Heart by which it is ſo eſteemed:

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a good Diſpoſition finds a ſuperlative Pleaſure in returning Good for Evil; and by an inexpreſſible Satisfaction of Mind, in ſo doing, feels the preſent Reward of Obedience; whereas a Spirit of Revenge is incompatible with Happineſs, an implacable Temper being a conſtant torment to its Poſſeſſor; and the Man who returns an Injury, feels more real Miſery, from the Rancour of his own Heart, than it is in his Power to inflict upon another.

SHOULD a Friend wound you in the moſt tender Part, by betraying a Confidence repoſed; Prudence forbids the expoſing yourſelf to a ſecond Deception, by placing any future Truſt in ſuch a Perſon; but though here all Obligations of Intimacy ceaſe, thoſe of Benevolence and Humanity remain ſtill in full Force, and are equally binding, as to every Act of Service and Aſſiſtance, even to the ſuffering a leſſer Evil yourſelf, in order to procure a much greater Good, to the Perſon by whom you have been thus ill-uſed: this is in general allowed to be the Duty of every Individual to all, as a Member of Society; but is par-

ticularly

ticularly inſtanced in the preſent Caſe, to ſhew, that not even a Breach of Friendſhip, the higheſt of all Provocations, will cancel the Duty, at all Times equally and unalterably Obligatory, of promoting both the Temporal and Eternal Happineſs of all your Fellow-Creatures, by every Method in your Power.

It has been by many thought impertinent at any Time to offer unasked Advice; the Reaſon of which may be chiefly owing to its being too frequently tendered with a ſupercilious Air, that implies a conceited Conſciouſneſs of ſuperior Wiſdom: 'tis the Manner, therefore, more than the Thing itſelf that gives Diſguſt.

If thoſe with whom you have any Degree of Intimacy, are guilty of what to you appears either wrong, or indiſcreet, ſpeak your Opinion to them with Freedom, tho' you ſhould even looſe a Friend by ſo doing: ſilence makes you, in ſome Meaſure, an Acceſſary to the Fault; but having thus once diſcharged your Duty, reſt there; they are to judge for themſelves; to repeat ſuch Admonitions, is both uſeleſs and impertinent;

pertinent; and will be thought to proceed rather from Pride than good Nature: to the Perſons concerned only, are you to ſpeak your Diſapprobation of their Conduct; when cenſured by others, ſay all that Truth or Probability will permit in their Juſtification.

It often happens, that, upon an accidental Quarrel between Friends, they ſeparately appeal to a third Perſon: in ſuch Caſe, alternately take the oppoſite Side; alledging every Argument in favour of the abſent Party, and placing the Miſtakes of the Complainer in the ſtrongeſt Light: this Method may probably at firſt diſpleaſe, but is always Right, as the moſt likely to procure a Reconciliation: if that takes place, each, equally obliged, will thankfully approve your Conduct; if not, you will have the Satisfaction of, at leaſt, endeavouring to be the Reſtorer of Peace. A contrary Behaviour, which generally proceeds from the mean Deſire of pleaſing, by Flattery, at the Expence of Truth, often widens a trifling Breach, into open and irreconcilable Enmity: People of this Diſpoſition are the

worſt

worſt Sort of Incendiaries; the greateſt Plague of Human Society, becauſe the moſt difficult to be guarded againſt, from their always wearing the ſpecious Diſguiſe of pretended Approbation and Friendſhip to the preſent, and equally deceitful Reſentment againſt the abſent Perſon or Company.

To enumerate all the ſocial Duties would lead me too far; ſuffice it, therefore my dear, in few Words to ſum up what remains. Let Truth ever dwell upon your Tongue; ſcorn to flatter any, and deſpiſe the Perſon who would practice ſo baſe an Art upon yourſelf. Be honeſtly open in every Part of your Behaviour and Converſation. All with whom you have any Intercourſe, even down to the meaneſt Station, have a Right to Civility, and good Humour from you. A Superiority of Rank or Fortune is no Licence for a proud ſupercilious Behaviour; the Diſadvantages of a dependent State are alone ſufficient to labour under, 'tis both unjuſt and cruel to encreaſe them, either by an haughty Deportment, or by the unwarrantable exerciſe of a capricious Temper.

EXA-

EXAMINE every Part of your Conduct towards others by the unerring Rule, of ſuppoſing a Change of Places; this will certainly lead to an impartial Judgment; do then what appears to you right, or in other Words, what you would they ſhould do unto you; which comprehends every Duty relative to Society.

AIM at Perfection, or you will never reach to an attainable Height of Virtue. Be Religious without Hypocriſy, Pious without Enthuſiaſm. Endeavour to merit the Favour of GOD, by a ſincere and uniform Obedience to whatever you know, or believe, to be his Will: and ſhould afflictive Evils be permitted to cloud the ſun-ſhine of your brighteſt Days, receive them with Submiſſion; ſatisfied that a Being, equally wiſe, omniſcient, and beneficent, at once ſees, and intends the Good of his whole Creation; and that every General or Particular Diſpenſation of his Providence towards the rational Part of it, is ſo calculated as to be productive of ultimate Happineſs, which nothing but the Misbehaviour of Indi-

viduals can prevent to themſelves. This Truth is ſurely an unanſwerable Argument for abſolute Reſignation to the Will of GOD; and ſuch a Reſignation, founded upon Reaſon and Choice, not enforced by Neceſſity, is unalterable Peace of Mind, fixed on too firm a Baſis to be ſhaken by Adverſity: Pain, Poverty, Ingratitude, Calumny, and even the Loſs of thoſe we hold moſt dear, may each tranſiently affect, but united cannot mortally wound it. Upon this Principle you will find it poſſible not only to be content, but chearful under all the diſagreeable Circumſtances this State of Probation is liable to; and by making a proper Uſe of them, effectually remove the Garb of Terror from the laſt of all temporal Evils, and learn with grateful Pleaſure, to meet approaching Death as the kind Remover of every painful Senſation, the friendly Guide to perfect and everlaſting Happineſs.

BELIEVE me this is not mere Theory; my own Experience every Moment proves the Fact undeniably true; my Conduct (in all

thoſe Relations which ſtill with me ſubſiſt, nearly as human Imperfection will allow) is governed by the Rules here laid down for you; which produces the conſtant rational Compoſure, that conſtitutes the moſt perfect Felicity of human Life; and with Truth I can aver, that I daily feel incomparably more real Satisfaction, more true Contentment in my preſent Retirement, than the gayeſt Scenes of Feſtive Mirth ever afforded me; am pleaſed with this Life, without an anxious Thought for the Continuance of it, and happy in the Hope, of hereafter exchanging it for an infinitely better. My Soul, unſtained by the Crimes unjuſtly imputed to me, moſt ſincerely forgives the malicious Authors of thoſe Imputations, anticipates the future Pleaſure of an open Acquittal, and in that Expectation looſes the Pain of preſent undeſerved Cenſure: by this is meant the Inſtance that was made the ſuppoſed Foundation for the laſt of innumerable Injuries received through him from whom I am conſcious of having deſerved the kindeſt Treatment: other Faults, no Doubt, I

might have many, to him had very few; nay, for ſeveral Years cannot, upon Reflection, accuſe myſelf of any Thing, but too abſolute, too unreſerved an Obedience to every Injunction, even where they were plainly contrary to the Dictates of my own Reaſon. — How wrong ſuch a Compliance, was clearly evinced by many Inſtances of it, having been ſince moſt ungenerouſly, and moſt ungratefully urged as circumſtantial Arguments againſt myſelf.

It muſt indeed be owned, that for the two or three laſt Years, tired with a long Series of repeated Inſults of a Nature almoſt beyond the Power of Imagination to conceive, my Temper became ſoured; a conſtant fruitleſs Endeavour to oblige, was changed into an abſolute Indifference about it; and ill Humour, occaſioned by frequent Diſappointments (a Conſequence I have experimentally warned you againſt) was, perhaps, ſometimes too much indulged; how far the unequalled Provocations may be allowed as an Excuſe for this, Heaven only muſt determine, whoſe Goodneſs has

thought

thought fit to releaſe me from the painful Situation, though by a Method, at preſent, not the moſt eligible, as it is the Cauſe of a Separation from my Children alſo, and thereby has put it out of my Power to attend, in the Manner I could have wiſhed, to their Education; a Duty that Inclination would have led me with equal Care and Pleaſure, more amply to fulfil, had they continued under my Juriſdiction.—But as Providence has thought fit otherways to determine, contented I ſubmit to every Diſpenſation, convinced that all Things are ordered for the beſt, and will, in the End, work together for Good to them that fear God, and ſincerely endeavour to keep his Commandments: If in theſe I err, am certain it is owing to a Miſtake in the Judgment, not a Defect of the Will.

THUS have I endeavoured, my dear Girl, in ſome Meaſure, to compenſate both to you and your Siſters, the Deprivation of a conſtant maternal Care, by adviſing you, according to my beſt Ability, in the moſt material Parts of your Conduct

through Life, as particularly as the Compaſs of a Letter would allow. May theſe few Inſtructions be as ſerviceable to you, as my Wiſhes would make them! and may that Almighty Being, to whom my daily Prayers aſcend for your Preſervation, grant you his heavenly Benediction, keep you from all moral Evil, lead you into the Paths of Righteouſneſs and Peace; and give us all an happy Meeting in thoſe Regions of unalterable Felicity, *prepared for thoſe, who by patient Continuance in well-doing, ſeek after Glory and Immortality.*

SHOULD any of you, when at Liberty to follow your own Inclinations, chooſe to write to me, a Direction to be left at Mr. Clutterbuck's, Attorney at Law, at the Bath, will always ſafely convey a Letter to my Hand.

So many have been the Inſtances of Falſhood and Deceit I have met with, where they were leaſt expected, that it may juſtify a Precaution againſt my Name being hereafter made Uſe of, without my Knowledge; eſpecially as my Promiſe of a future Letter

may

may lay a Foundation for ſuch an Attempt. That future Letter muſt contain the Relation of many Events, which, for the Sake of the Perſons concerned in them, I could wiſh (my Heart being really void of all angry Reſentment) there was no Neceſſity of making Public: if therefore I can find a certain Means of conveying the Narrative to your Brothers, Siſters, and yourſelf only, when you are all arrived at a proper Age to receive and underſtand it, that Method will be preferred; if not, I muſt again have Recourſe to this Channel, ſhould I, before that intended Period, be removed from this State of Exiſtence; ſo neceſſary does it appear to me to undeceive the Minds of my Children, and juſtify to Them, who are ſo nearly concerned, my injured Character; that the Manuſcript is depoſited in the Hands of a Friend, on whom I can ſafely depend for the Publication, at the Time prefixed; and who has alſo ſome original Letters, together with an Order from me, which will be ſatisfactory Vouchers of its being wrote by myſelf: this Precaution will

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effectually

effectually secure you from the Possibility of being imposed upon, by any pretended posthumous Letter of mine; and, whilst I live, shall *write* my Name to whatever is by me addressed to any of you.

DEPEND upon it, therefore my Dear, most certainly, that I am not the Author of any Epistle, which bears not the MANUAL SIGN of

Your affectionate Mother,

J. Pennington